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DETAILED ACTION

1. Amendment received on 10/02/2008 has been entered into record. Claim 1 is amended.

Claim 1 is currently pending.

2. Preliminary amendment received on 04/01/2008 was entered into record. Claim 1 was amended. Claims 2-24 were cancelled.

Priority

3. This application has no priority claim made. The filing date is 03/31/2004.

Examiner's Amendment

4. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

5. Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with LaRhonda Jefferson-Mills (reg. no. 61,649) on 12/10/2008.

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6. The application has been amended against applicant submitted claim set dated 10/02/2008 as follows (only examiner amended claims are shown):

IN THE CLAIMS

1. A method for filtering electronic mail messages on a client computer in a distributed computer network, the method comprising the computer implemented steps of:

determining whether an interrupt is associated with an electronic mail message, wherein the interrupt is a specific interrupt designation of the electronic mail message, and wherein the electronic mail message comprises an interrupt indicator attached to one of a header and a footer of the electronic mail message;

determining whether a sender of the electronic mail message is authorized to send the electronic mail message with the interrupt indicator, wherein the authorization to send the electronic mail message with the interrupt indicator is based upon a corporate directory that includes an organizational hierarchy structure;

responsive to determining that the interrupt is associated with the electronic mail message and the sender is authorized to send the electronic mail message with the interrupt indicator, determining whether a desktop of the client computer is active;

responsive to determining that the desktop of the client computer is active, automatically displaying a content of the electronic mail message in a popup window, wherein the popup window comprises a reply button and an action completed button, and wherein the popup window is displayed in a forefront position on the desktop of the client computer, and wherein the popup window remains in the forefront position until a recipient of the electronic mail

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message responds to the content of the electronic mail message by selecting one of the reply button and the action completed button;

responsive to the recipient of the electronic mail message selecting one of the reply button and the action completed button, closing the popup window;

responsive to determining that the sender is not authorized to send the electronic mail message with the interrupt indicator, delivering the electronic mail message to the recipient inbox; and

responsive to determining that the desktop of the client computer is inactive, delaying the display of the electronic mail message until the desktop becomes active.

Reasons for Allowance

7. Claim 1 is allowed as amended above.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The closest prior arts of record issued to Ayan (US 6769002 B2) and Beyda (US 20030229670 A1) and Marsot et al. (US 7010790 B2) together fail to teach or suggest "a method for filtering electronic mail messages on a client computer in a distributed computer network, the method comprising the computer implemented steps of: determining whether an interrupt is associated with an electronic mail message, wherein the interrupt is a specific interrupt designation of the electronic mail message, and wherein the electronic mail message comprises an interrupt indicator attached to one of a header and a footer of the electronic mail message; determining whether a sender of the electronic mail message is authorized to send the electronic mail message with the interrupt indicator, wherein the authorization to send the electronic mail message with the interrupt indicator is based upon a corporate directory that includes an

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organizational hierarchy structure; responsive to determining that the interrupt is associated with the electronic mail message and the sender is authorized to send the electronic mail message with the interrupt indicator, determining whether a desktop of the client computer is active; responsive to determining that the desktop of the client computer is active, automatically displaying a content of the electronic mail message in a popup window, wherein the popup window comprises a reply button and an action completed button, and wherein the popup window is displayed in a forefront position on the desktop of the client computer, and wherein the popup window remains in the forefront position until a recipient of the electronic mail message responds to the content of the electronic mail message by selecting one of the reply button and the action completed button; responsive to the recipient of the electronic mail message selecting one of the reply button and the action completed button, closing the popup window; responsive to determining that the sender is not authorized to send the electronic mail message with the interrupt indicator, delivering the electronic mail message to the recipient inbox; and responsive to determining that the desktop of the client computer is inactive, delaying the display of the electronic mail message until the desktop becomes active” as currently amended. Applicant argues that the prior arts do not disclose or suggest the limitation combination of “responsive to determining that the desktop of the client computer is active, automatically displaying a content of the electronic mail message in a popup window, wherein the popup window comprises a reply button and an action completed button, and wherein the popup window is displayed in a forefront position on the desktop of the client computer, and wherein the popup window remains in the forefront position until a recipient of the electronic mail message responds to the content of the electronic mail message by selecting one of the reply button and the action completed button”

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(see 3rd paragraph on page 5 of current amendment) and “responsive to the recipient of the electronic mail message selecting one of the reply button and the action completed button, closing the popup window” (see 5th paragraph on page 7 of current amendment”) with further question on the motivation of combining prior arts for previous claim rejection in office action mailed on 09/12/2008 (see sections II.B. and II.C. in pages 8-9 of current amendment). These arguments are considered persuasive with further consideration of the current combination of limitations as examiner amended above.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

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Conclusion

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Peling A. Shaw whose telephone number is (571) 272-7968. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00 - 4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, William C. Vaughn can be reached on (571) 272-3922. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Peling A Shaw/
Examiner, Art Unit 2444